



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/798,014	03/10/2004	Tac-ahn Jahng	559552000120	4949

25225 7590 07/31/2006

MORRISON & FOERSTER LLP
12531 HIGH BLUFF DRIVE
SUITE 100
SAN DIEGO, CA 92130-2040

EXAMINER

CUMBERLEDGE, JERRY L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3733

DATE MAILED: 07/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/798,014

Applicant(s)

JAHNG, TAE-AHN

Examiner

Jerry Cumberledge

Art Unit

3733

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 August 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 01/13/06, 07/21/05.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

The specification is objected to under first paragraph of 35 U.S.C 112, as failing to provide an adequate written description of the invention and failing to adequately teach how to make and/or use the invention.

It is unclear from the applicant's disclosure how a solid metal rod (claim 1) made of titanium, stainless steel, iron steel, titanium, titanium alloy, and/ or NITINOL (claim 2) can acquire a flexible property by adding grooves (claim 1) and tunnels (claim 6) to the metal. It appears that the metals (especially titanium and steel) would not acquire any significant flexibility from adding grooves and holes in them. Thus, one skilled in the art would not be able to make and/or use this invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, for the reasons set forth in the objection to the specification.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Art Unit: 3733

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "rod" in line 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this

Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, 6-9, and 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bramlet (US Pat. 6,447,546).

Bramlet discloses a flexible connection unit (Fig. 7 below) (column 2, lines 50-53) comprising a solid metal rod (Fig. 7 below) having grooves formed in a spiral configuration (Fig. 7 below). The rod is made of titanium (column 10, lines 25-29). There is a plurality of transverse tunnels formed in the rod (top Fig. 18 below). The openings for each respective tunnel are located on opposite sides of the cylindrical wall of the rod (top Fig. 18 below). Each tunnel passes through the center longitudinal axis of the cylindrical rod at a predetermined angle (top Fig. 18 below) and the adjacent tunnels can be considered to share a common

Art Unit: 3733

opening on ones side of the cylindrical wall, forming a zig-zag pattern of interior tunnels passing through the central longitudinal axis (bottom Fig. 18 below).

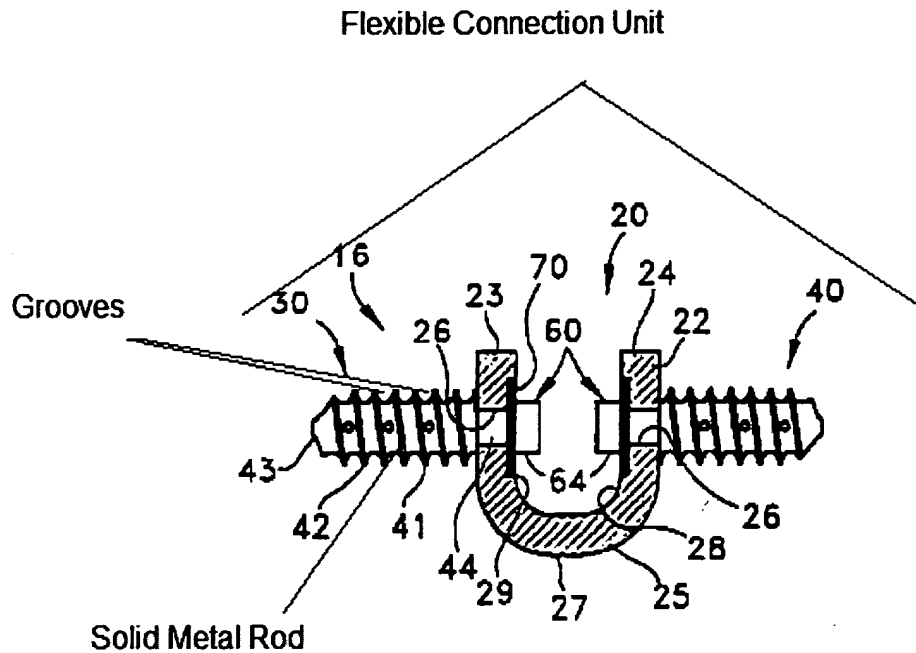
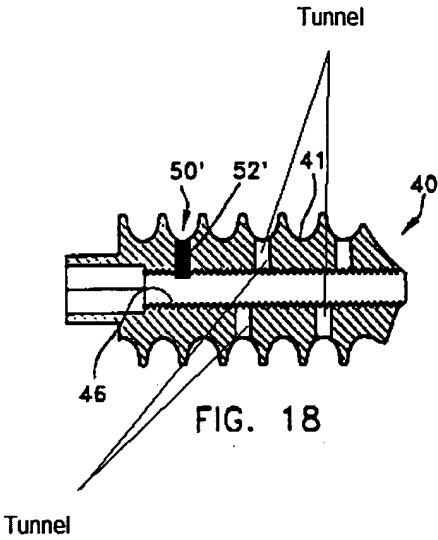
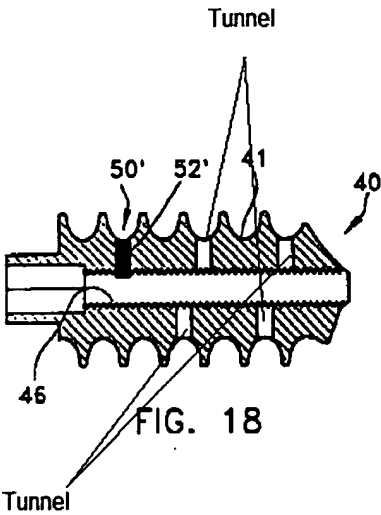


FIG. 7



Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bramlet (US Pat. 6,447,546).

Bramlet discloses the claimed invention except for the length, the depth and width of the grooves, the angle of the grooves, the space between the grooves, and the internal diameter of the transverse tunnels.

It has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233. The following claims have obvious optimum or workable ranges:

With regards to claims 3, 4 and 5, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the rod of Bramlet at a length of between 4 and 8 centimeters and having a cylindrical diameter between 4 and 8 millimeters.

With regards to claims 4 and 5, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the

Art Unit: 3733

grooves of Bramlet et al. at a depth between 1 and 4 millimeters and a width between 0.1 and 0.5 millimeters.

With regards to claim 5, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the grooves of Bramlet et al. spiraling around the rod at an angle from horizontal to between 50 and 80 degrees, wherein the spacing between adjacent spirals of the groove is between 3 and 6 millimeters.

With regards to claims 10 and 14, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the tunnels of Brmalet et al. having an internal diameter between 0.2 and 3 millimeters.

With regard to the statements of intended use and other functional statements, they do not impose any structural limitations on the claims distinguishable over the flexible connection unit of Bramlet et al., which is capable of being used as claimed if one so desires to do so. *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Furthermore, the law of anticipation does not require that the reference "teach" what the subject patent teaches, but rather it is only necessary that the claims under attack "read on" something in the reference. *Kalman v. Kimberly Clark Corp.*, 218 USPQ 781 (CCPA 1983). Furthermore, the manner in which a device is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from

Art Unit: 3733

prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. Ex parte Masham, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1987).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See attached PTO-892.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jerry Cumberledge whose telephone number is (571) 272-2289. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3733

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JLC



EDUARDO C. ROBERT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER